

REMARKS

With the entry of this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 4, 5 and 8-15 will be pending in this patent application.

AMENDMENTS TO SPECIFICATION

Applicant has carefully reviewed the specification and, in this paper, has made amendments so that the disclosure of the invention employs language that is clearer and more appropriate and provides better agreement with the language used in the claims. Applicant submits that all of the amendments to the specification made herein are commensurate with and supported by the original disclosure in the application and do not introduce new matter. Applicant therefore requests that the amendments to the specification presented herein be entered.

PRIOR ART REJECTION I

Claims 1, 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by US 3866731 (Nagel). Applicant traverses this rejection insofar as it might be deemed applicable to claims 1, 8 and 9 as now presented.

The subject matter of claim 1 has been reorganized for enhanced clarity. In addition claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite the novel buoyant effect exerted on the laundry article in the performance of the claimed method, as clearly described in the specification in this application.

The washing method disclosed and claimed in this application employs filling of the inner tub and formations on an inner surface of the tub that cause a laundry article to float in the inner tub and cleaned effectively without subjecting the laundry article to harsh movements in the tub. The washing tub is filled with the cleaning liquid and is rotated, and a flow is generated in the cleaning liquid by the protruding portions provided for the washing tub, thereby achieving the effect of giving the buoyancy to the laundry article to be spread in the cleaning liquid. As a result, the contacting area of the cleaning liquid and the laundry article is increased, so that the effect of a surface active agent is effectively brought out, thereby enhancing the cleaning effect.

The advantages of Applicant's disclosed and claimed washing method cannot be attained in known washing methods.

The disclosure in Nagel is directed to a drive system for a known front-load washing machine. There is no disclosure in Nagel relating to filling of the clothes tub 8, much less a filling accompanied by rotating of the clothes tub that brings about buoyancy toward the center of the tub that effects expansion of the laundry article and keeps the laundry article away from the inner surface of the tub. Also there is no disclosure in Nagel of any formations on the inner surface of the tub 8 and consequently no disclosure of the advantageous effect of such formations in a washing method.

In view of the foregoing observations, Applicant submits that the disclosure in Nagel cannot meet the clear requirements of Applicant's claims 1, 8 and 9 as now presented and therefore cannot properly serve as a basis for rejecting claims 1, 8 and 9 under 35 USC § 102(b).

PRIOR ART REJECTION II

Claims 2-7 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nagel in view of US 1641780 (Parker). Applicant traverses this rejection insofar as it might be deemed applicable to claims 2, 4 and 5 as now presented.

The Examiner cites Parker as disclosing "a sine wave structure in the circumferential direction of the spin basket" and contends that it would have been obvious to have used "sine-wave structure/corrugations" taught by Parker in the Nagel apparatus.

The apparatus disclosed by Parker is an extractor that uses a basket with a corrugated wall rotating about a vertical axis for centrifugally extracting liquid from, e.g., laundered garments. There is no disclosure or suggestion whatsoever in Parker that the apparatus would be useful for washing garments.

According to the disclosure in Parker, the formations on the inside of the basket are arranged along the circumferential direction of the extractor. As required by Applicant's amended claim 1, the protruding portions extend in an axial direction of the cylindrical basket-like washing tub. Obviously, the formations in the basket of the Parker apparatus cannot have the same effect as the protrusions in Applicant's method.

Applicant submits that the application of the Parker teachings to the Nagel apparatus, which employs a *wash* tub movable about a *horizontal* axis, as proposed by the Examiner, would require an unlikely combination of different apparatuses employed for different purposes, would conflict with the teachings in Nagel and would not have been obvious.

In addition, there are no teachings in Parker that can cure deficiencies in the Nagel disclosure vis-à-vis the requirements of the method recited in Applicant's claim 1, as pointed out above. Consequently, no reasonable combination of the teachings in Nagel and Parker could meet the requirements of Applicant's claims.

In view of the foregoing observations, Applicant submits that no reasonable combination of the disclosures in Nagel and Parker can properly serve as a basis for rejecting claims 2, 4 and 5, as now presented, under 35 USC § 103(a).

ALLOWABILITY OF NEW CLAIMS

Claims 10-15 are drawn to a washing apparatus and include limitations that are analogous to those recited in Applicant's claims drawn to a washing method. Claims 10-15 are allowable for the same reasons advanced above for the allowability of claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 8 and 9 over the disclosures in Nagel and/or Parker.

CONCLUSION

In view of the amendments, observations and arguments presented herein, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejections stated in the outstanding Office Action and recognize all of the pending claims as allowable.

If unresolved matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Frederick R. Handren, Reg. No. 32,874, at the telephone number provided below, so that these matters can be addressed and resolved expeditiously.

Application No. 10/591,171
Amendment dated December 24, 2008
Reply to Office Action of September 24, 2008

Docket No.: 5814-0101PUS1

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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